

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-08

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 090016

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: PAN AM ROUTE RIGHTS

1. DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ADVISED BY PAN AM THAT IT HAS BEEN DENIED TRAFFIC RIGHTS ON PRAGUE-DAMASCUS SECTOR OF NEW SERVICE FROM FRANKFURT. SYRIAN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION ON APRIL 19, STATED DENIAL BASED ON SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES AND CZECH AIRLINE'S(CSA) POOLING ARRANGEMENT ON PRAGUE TO DAMASCUS SECTOR.

2. SECTION 1 OF ANNEX TO AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA PROVIDES DESIGNATED US AIRLINE WITH "...RIGHT TO PICK UP AND DISCHARGE INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN PASSENGERS, CARGO AND MAIL AT DAMASCUS ON THE FOLLOWING ROUTE: THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THROUGH EUROPE AND TURKEY TO
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SYRIA AND BEYOND TO INDIA; VIA INTERMEDIATE POINTS, IN BOTH DIRECTIONS." PRAGUE IS OBVIOUSLY AN INTERMEDIATE POINT AND IN USG VIEW SYRIAN DGCA HAS NO BASIS UNDER BILATERAL AGREEMENT FOR DENYING PAN AM AUTHORITY TO CARRY TRAFFIC ON THIS ROUTE.

3. EMBASSY REQUESTED TO REMIND DGCA OF ABOVE PROVISIONS

OF THE BILATERAL AGREEMENT AND INSIST THAT PAN AM BE PERMITTED TO OPERATE ITS PLANNED SERVICE AS SCHEDULED

BEGINNING APRIL 24. IN THIS REGARD, EMBASSY SHOULD POINT OUT TO DGCA THAT SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES HAS APPLIED TO CAB FOR RIGHTS UNDER SAME BILATERAL AGREEMENT. SYRIAN GOVERNMENT'S WITHHOLDING OF RIGHTS GRANTED BY AGREEMENT TO PAN AM COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT PENDING CAB APPLICATION.

4. IN ANOTHER MATTER, PAN AM ALSO REPORTS THAT DGCA HAS ADVISED PAN AM REP THAT TWO ROUTINGS ACROSS TURKISH/ SYRIAN FRONTIER OVER GAZIANTEP AND ADANA, TURKEY TO ALEPPO WERE DENIED BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT INTERNATIONAL AIRWAYS AND BECAUSE MILITARY RESTRICTIONS PRECLUDED THEIR USE. PAN AM WISHES TO AVOID APPROACH FROM ANKARA OVER CYPRUS WHICH WOULD ADD CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE TO FLIGHTS AS WELL AS ENCOUNTERING POTENTIAL SAFETY PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF TURKISH/CYPRIOIOT AIR CONTROL DISPUTE.

5. EMBASSY REQUESTED TO INVESTIGATE DENIAL OF PERMISSION TO USE AIRWAYS FROM TURKEY. ARE THERE AIRWAYS ACROSS THE LAND BORDER BETWEEN TURKEY AND SYRIA? ARE OTHER FOREIGN AND/OR DOMESTIC AIRLINES PERMITTED TO USE SUCH ROUTES? IF SO, EMBASSY SHOULD REQUEST THAT PAN AM BE GIVEN SIMILAR RIGHT. IF NOT, EMBASSY SHOULD REQUEST EXPLANATION FOR WHY TURKISH AND SYRIAN FLIGHT INFORMATION REGIONS CANNOT OR WILL NOT COOPERATE TO PASS OVER COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT OPERATING FROM ANKARA.

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6. COMMENT: FYI: CAB IS IN MIDST OF PROCEDURES GRANTING FOREIGN AIR CARRIER PERMIT TO SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES AND ROYAL JORDANIAN AIRLINES. PAN AMERICAN ADVISES THAT IT WILL INTERVENE IN THIS PROCEEDING IF SYRIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CHANGE ITS POSITION ON PRAGUE-DAMASCUS SERVICE. END FYI. IN VIEW OF EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS TO WHICH THE USG HAS GONE TO PROVIDE SYRIA AND JORDAN A JOINT SERVICE TO THE US, DEPARTMENT FEELS THAT SYRIAN ATTITUDE IS CERTAINLY NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED AGREEMENT. TO DENY THE BASIC RIGHTS GRANTED THE US AIRLINE BEFORE THE AGREEMENT IS COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED COULD CAST DOUBTS AS TO THE BONA FIDES OF THE AGREEMENT ITSELF.

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